



NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOL
RESOURCE CENTER

Creating Communities of Care

*Participant Guide for Workshop on
Designing Supports for Student and
Staff Well-Being and Mental Health*



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Part 1: Putting It Into Practice

Now it is time for you to start creating your own plan for fostering a community of care within your school. During this workshop, collect your initial thoughts for Step 1 and Step 2. When you return to your school, assemble your care team and dive deeper into the questions offered in Steps 1-5.

Step 1: Create a care team to improve mental health and well-being

Who should be on your care team tasked with improving student and staff mental health and well-being? *If you already have a team, who might be missing from your team?*

Staff/Experts Within Your Buildings	Community Organizations	Parent and Community Members

In your first meeting with your care team, ask the following questions. Feel free to record some of your initial ideas below prior to meeting with your care team:

1. Why does your care team exist? _____

2. What do we want our school to look like/sound like? _____

3. How do we want our school community to interact with one another? _____

4. What do our students need to feel safe and healthy in our school? _____

5. How can we find out who feels safe and who does not? _____

In your first meeting, create norms, timelines, and processes to ensure each members' diverse perspectives and experiences are considered and valued.

Also, assign roles to the care team's members to help lead processes, analyze data, and collaborate with stakeholders.

If you already have a care team in place, assess yourself for areas of improvement below. Use the space provided to write down your notes as to why you answered in the way you did and other ideas for improvement.

1. Does the current team need to be revamped to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented? Yes/No/Unsure _____

2. Does your team need to revisit and redefine its why? Has the purpose of this group changed over time? How does the team know? Yes/No/Unsure _____

3. Do norms and processes need to be reconsidered to produce more equitable and safe learning environments? Yes/No/Unsure _____

4. Do roles need to be reassigned to make the care team more effective? Yes/No/Unsure _____

5. Do norms, timelines, and processes need to be reconsidered to make your care team more effective? Yes/No/Unsure _____

Step 2: Identify school and community strengths and conduct an evidence-based needs assessment

Identify your initial thoughts on your school community's strengths and needs.

Strengths	Assets	Needs

Revisit these thoughts with your care team when you meet. Ask yourselves the following questions:

1. What community activities are already occurring that support well-being and connection?

2. What strengths do families, students, and educators bring into the school?

As a team, develop your plan for collecting data to support your needs assessment.

How will you collect data?	What data will you collect?	How will you analyze your data?
<input type="checkbox"/> Student surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Parent surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Staff surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Listening sessions with students <input type="checkbox"/> Listening sessions with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Listening sessions with community <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with students <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews with community <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		



Remember... Apply an equity lens when collecting and analyzing data to ensure that data is analyzed by race, English learner status, disability status, and other characteristics relevant to the school context. Ensure that care is responsive to student need, that assumptions and biases are questioned, and that data are analyzed from multiple perspectives.

If you already have identified school and community strengths and conducted a needs assessment, assess yourself for areas of improvement below. Use the space provided to write down your notes as to why you answered in the way you did and other ideas for improvement.

1. Do we need to re-evaluate the school community's strengths? How do we know? What evidence can we now point to or collect to understand our school community's assets?
 Yes/No/Unsure _____

2. What data do we need to collect to re-evaluate students' mental health and well-being needs? Do we already have these assessments and data analysis systems in place? What data could we collect to better understand our students' well-being and academic needs?

Yes/No/Unsure _____

3. In terms of equity, which groups of students' needs are being met? Whose are not? How do we know? Do we need to adjust how we collect data to better understand how mental health supports can be more equitably implemented?

Yes/No/Unsure _____

Step 3: Develop a shared vision for student mental health within your school

After conducting the strengths and needs assessment, develop a shared vision for improving student mental health to share throughout the school community.

Identify SMART Goals	Identify Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term Outcomes for Each Goal	Develop Strategies to Achieve Goals
Goal #1:	Short: Mid: Long:	
Goal #2:	Short: Mid:	

	Long:	
Goal #3:	Short:	
	Mid:	
	Long:	

Determine how you will communicate your new vision, goals, and strategies to your key stakeholders.

Goal:	What message will you communicate?	How will you communicate your message?	Who is the audience for your message?	What actions do you want your audience to take?

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If you already developed a shared vision for student and staff mental health in your school, assess yourself for areas of improvement below. Use the space provided to write down your notes as to why you answered in the way you did and other ideas for improvement.

1. Based on our current needs assessment and evaluation of strengths, do we need to redefine our vision for student mental health and well-being?

Yes/No/Unsure _____

2. Do we need to redefine our goals and strategies for realizing this vision? Yes/No/Unsure

3. How can we better communicate our vision with students and families?

Step 4: Provide the tools and ongoing training necessary, as well as develop community partnerships that support your vision

Now that you have developed your strategies, it is time to execute them by providing tools and ongoing training, and forging community partnerships to support your vision. We recommend developing a project plan to help keep you accountable for achieving results. A simple project management template is shared below to get you started, but please use a system that works best for your team.

Goal #	Task Name	Assigned To	Start Date	End Date	Desired Outcome

As you develop your plan, or seek to improve your current plans, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do we need to hire new personnel? Or redesign the roles of current personnel?
Yes/No/Unsure _____

2. Are there partnerships that could strategically advance our vision? How can we form these partnerships? Yes/No/Unsure _____

3. What training does our staff currently need to realize our goals for student mental health and well-being?

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4. Do we have effective data management and analysis systems in place to assess students' needs? If not, where are we falling short? How can we set up better data management and analysis systems? Yes/No/Unsure _____
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5. Do we have the right tools, curricula, and programs in place? What is needed to close any gaps? Yes/No/Unsure _____
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Step 5: Create conditions that support continuous improvement

As you create your plan for your community of care, make sure you are creating conditions that support continuous improvement. This includes the following:

Condition for Improvement	Does the condition exist?	If no, how will you implement?
Regular data collection related to mental health and well-being	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Data management and analysis systems in place	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Regular evaluation of data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Routines to support executing your vision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Periodic re-evaluation and refinement of vision, goals, and strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Also, ask yourself the following questions related to your continuous improvement efforts:

1. Is your school collecting the right data? If not, what needs to change? Yes/No/Unsure

2. Are you effectively managing and analyzing the data to provide responsive supports based on students' needs? If not, what needs to change in terms of structures, tools, routines, etc.? Yes/No/Unsure

3. Are you effectively managing and analyzing data to understand if your goals for student mental health are being realized? If not, what needs to change in terms of structures, tools, routines, etc.? Yes/No/Unsure

4. Is the care team able to effectively re-evaluate progress towards goals and the vision for student mental health? If not, what needs to change? Yes/No/Unsure

5. Do parents, students, community members, teachers, and other stakeholders outside of the care team have a voice in the continuous improvement process? Yes/No/Unsure

Part 2: Identifying Barriers to Creating and Executing Your Community of Care

Identify the barriers you may encounter in creating and executing your community of care. Then consider strategies to overcome these barriers.

Potential Barrier	Strategies to Overcome Barrier

Part 3: Action Steps

Write down three immediate action steps you are going to take following this session.

Action Step	What do you need to complete this step?	Deadline to complete



Heard a great idea during this session? Write it down here!
